

INTEGRATED HARBOUR DEVELOPMENT IN FLANDERS: A DELICATE EXERCISE

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The Flemish Land Agency (Vlaamse Landmaatschappij, VLM) aims to preserve open space in an increasingly populated Flanders and improve environmental quality by means of projects in rural and peri-urban areas. With this aim, VLM is also participating by several projects to the integrated development of the international harbours of Antwerp, Ghent and Zeebrugge.

Projects include a.o. the development of new nature areas to compensate loss of European protected natural habitats and bird areas (Natura2000), land banking for farmers to mitigate loss of land as a result of harbour and related nature development, the development of nature and landscape buffers to enhance the liveability of residential areas in the proximity of harbour industry. Others projects are intended to mitigate the environmental impact of harbour related infrastructure, such as railways, highways and waterways.

As an important aspect of integrated development, VLM projects are multidisciplinary approached and include intensive consultation and participation of all stakeholders, imperative to obtain the necessary local social support for harbour development and related measures.

The presentation will elaborate on some project cases and their results, including experienced drivers and obstacles for integrated development in related coastal areas.